



Industry leaders and experts virtually attended VICA's 32nd Annual Business Forecast Conference (BFC) on Thursday, October 28 and Friday, October 29. The conference consisted of an Election Breakfast Panel, an Economic Forecast Breakfast, panels on a variety of topics impacting businesses, and keynote discussions with **Anthem Blue Cross** President Beth Andersen and **Southwest Airlines** President Tom Nealon. The conference, presented by the **Southern California Gas Company** and **Wells Fargo**, brought business leaders together virtually to discuss economic recovery and critical issues going into 2021.

Election Breakfast Panel

Attendees kicked off the conference with the Election Breakfast Panel, sponsored by **Klink Campaigns**, and moderated by Lisa Gritzner (**LG Strategies**). Matt Klink of **Klink Campaigns** began the discussion by looking at how disinformation and selective information will impact the election. Mindy Romero of **USC** further emphasized how this will influence voters, saying "it is incredibly damaging," that our leaders are not standing up against blatant disinformation. Looking at California, Ken Miller of **Claremont McKenna College** stated the outcome of this year's ballot measures will show how far left California has moved in the last few decades. Tom Ross of **Meridian Pacific** agreed, but also noted that the sheer number of measures was "intimidating" to voters. In her closing remarks, Political analyst Sherry Jeffe said she has, "learned to never say never in politics," and that we cannot predict the results of an election before they happen, regardless of how sure the possibilities might be.

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Economic Forecast Breakfast

Attendees began their second day of the BFC with the Economic Forecast Breakfast, sponsored by Bank of America and moderated by Redonna Carpenter-Woods (**Bank of America**). Jeffrey Kravetz, Regional Investment



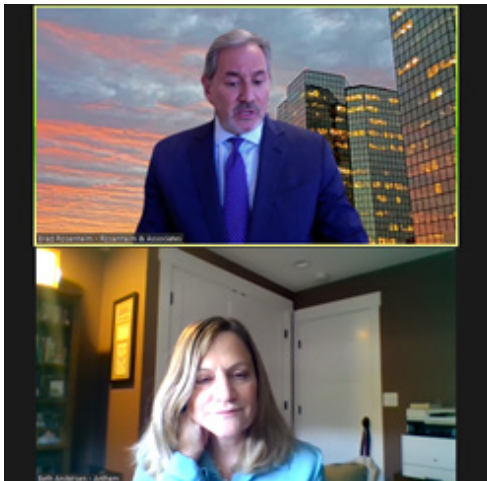
ELECTION PANEL: Moderator Lisa Gritzner (**LG Strategies**), Matt Klink (**Klink Campaigns**), Mindy Romero (**USC**), Ken Miller (**Claremont McKenna College**), Tom Ross (**Meridian Pacific**), and political analyst Sherry Jeffe



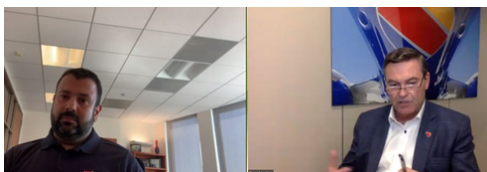
ECONOMIC FORECAST BREAKFAST: Moderator Redonna Carpenter-Woods (**Bank of America**), Jeffrey Kravetz (**US Bank**) and Charles Dougherty (**Wells Fargo**)



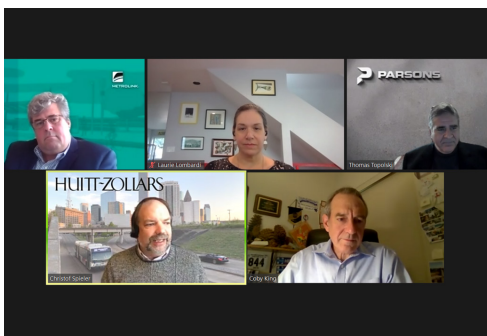
VICA Members enjoyed the **Western Bagel** bagels sent to their home to enjoy during the conference!



KEYNOTE SPEAKER DAY 1: Beth Andersen of **Anthem Blue Cross** expressed optimism about the possibilities of providing care post-pandemic.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER DAY 2: Tom Andersen of **Southwest** reiterated that the airline industry is at the forefront of safety, and that he expects a strong recovery of travel.



TRACK 1 | DAY 1: Coby King (**High Point Strategies**), Christof Spieler (**Rice University**), Thomas Topoloski (**Parsons**), Jeffrey Dunn (**Metrolink**), and Laurie Lombardi (**Metro**).

Director for the Private Client Reserve of **US Bank** presented an in-depth analysis of the optimistic future of the economy, saying “despite the issues [. . .] we still maintain a glass half full perspective.” Then, Charles Dougherty from **Wells Fargo** Securities provided insight into the long-term effects the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the economy, confirming that recovery “is a tall mountain to climb.” Both confirmed that 2021 is expected to be a positive year for growth as the markets settle, but there are still many unknowns, such as the 2020 election and the future of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Keynote Luncheon

Beth Andersen

Our Day 1 keynote speaker, Beth Andersen, President of **Anthem Blue Cross**, voiced concern and optimism about the future of health coverage and care as we work on ending the COVID-19 pandemic. Andersen said, “one thing that got lost during the pandemic is an emphasis on wellness,” especially in terms of primary care and chronic condition management. Because of this, she emphasized that **Anthem Blue Cross** is “focused on how to deliver wellness,” through education, outreach to address inequity in communities, and individualized care. Our keynote luncheon with Beth Andersen was sponsored by the US Bank and The Walt Disney Company, and was moderated by VICA Chair Brad Rosenheim of Rosenheim & Associates.

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Keynote Luncheon

Tom Nealon

Our Day 2 keynote speaker, Tom Nealon, President of **Southwest Airlines**, discussed the future of the airline industry and steps that are being taken to ensure confidence in travel. He indicated the industry is in a fluid moment, where health and safety regulations are being created and changed at a rapid speed. Nealon explained that innovations in sanitation have been made and delivered, but that governments will need to have “some sort of consistency” in their standards before confidence in flying returns. He stated that he is “optimistic” about the development of the vaccine and the revitalization of the travel industry. Our keynote luncheon with Tom Nealon was sponsored by **The Walt Disney Company** and **US Bank**, and was moderated by Hamed Tavajohi (**US Bank**).

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Track 1 | Day 1:

Transportation – Finding the Right Path Forward

The Transportation panel, moderated by Coby King (**High Point Strategies**), focused on the expansion of Los Angeles’ transit system post-pandemic, even when resources have been strained. Christof Spieler of Rice University suggested that access, frequency and pedestrian friendliness are the keys to Los Angeles achieving a world class transit system. Thomas Topoloski (**Parsons**) discussed the integration of multiple modes of transportation and the COVID-19 crisis as a catalyst for innovation in transit. Jeffrey Dunn shared insight into health and safety in transit, explaining that **Metrolink** focuses on public input, increases in cleaning staff and enforcement of social distancing to keep riders safe. Laurie Lombardi provided updates on **Metro**’s budget and projects amid the pandemic, saying they “are focused on project readiness” and ensuring that Valley projects get done. Track 1 was sponsored by **Clear Channel Outdoor**, and the transportation panel was sponsored by **Metro** and **Parsons**.

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Track 2 | Day 1:

Work from Home/Return to Office

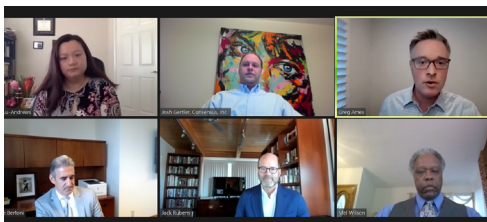
Moderated by Victor Berrellez (**US Bank**), the Work from Home/Return to Office panel provided valuable insight into the positive and negative effects of working from home, as well as what a



TRACK 2 | DAY 1: Work from home panel with moderator Victor Berrellez (**US Bank**), Matthew Osborn (**WeWork**), Susan Becker (**Synergy Global Housing**), Scott Romick (**Lee & Associates**), Andrew Marshall (**U.S. Ecology**)



TRACK 3 | DAY 1: Entertainment panel with moderator Philip Sokoloski (**FilmLA**), Jonathan Sanford (**Kilburn Live**), Kathy Bañuelos (**Comcast NBCUniversal**), and Ryan Northcott (**Los Angeles Football Club**)



TRACK 4 | DAY 1: Housing panel with moderator Josh Gertler (**Consensus**), Ran Lu-Andrews (**California Lutheran University**), Vince Bertoni (**LA Planning Department**), Greg Ames (**Trammell Crow Company**), Jack Rubens (**Sheppard Mullin**), and Mel Wilson (**Southland Regional Association of Realtors**)



TRACK 5 | DAY 1: Energy panel with moderator Charlie Crumpley (**San Fernando Valley Business Journal**), Joseph Avila (**Southern California Gas Company**), Nancy Sutley (**LA Department of Water and Power**), and Tiffany Roberts (**Western States Petroleum Association**)

safe return to the office will look like. Matthew Osborn of WeWork and Susan Becker (**Synergy Global Housing**) discussed alternatives to traditional housing and office spaces, which can provide solutions to muddled work life balances. Scott Romick (**Lee & Associates**) argued that a safe return to office provides crucial face-to-face interaction and collaboration, and that remote work is not a sustainable alternative. Andrew Marshall of U.S. Ecology provided a more nuanced approach, saying that planning and flexibility are vital to the decisions of employees and companies. Track 2 was sponsored by the **University of Phoenix**, and the Work from Home/Return to Office Panel was sponsored by **Synergy Global Housing**.

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Track 3 | Day 1: Future of Entertainment

The entertainment industry and the future of live events, theme parks and the media were the focus of our Entertainment panel, moderated by Philip Sokoloski (**FilmLA**). Jonathan Sanford of Kilburn Live explained the huge resurgence in demand for drive-ins and other socially distant venues will probably end after a COVID vaccine is released. Kathy Bañuelos (**Comcast NBCUniversal**) provided insight into what theme parks will look like in California when they reopen, including new safety protocols and innovations. Ryan Northcott of the Los Angeles Football Club gave a more optimistic take on the future of attendance for live events, saying "it is going to be very robust." Track 3 was sponsored by **ViacomCBS**, and the Future of Entertainment panel was sponsored by **FilmLA**.

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Track 4 | Day 1: How Do We Build More Housing?

At the end of the COVID-19 crisis, Los Angeles and California will still be facing a housing crisis. The housing panel, moderated by Josh Gertler (**Consensus**), talked about the issues and solutions we face as we expand housing post-pandemic. Ran Lu-Andrews (**California Lutheran University**) defended California's middle class, saying they are being left behind by policies they pay for, but do not benefit from. Greg Ames (**Trammell Crow Company**) talked about the wide-ranging economic benefits of affordability of housing saying making housing more affordable "makes life more affordable." Vince Bertoni (City of Los Angeles) gave updates on the LA City Planning Department and changes that have been made due to the pandemic. Jack Rubens (**Sheppard Mullin**) and Mel Wilson (**Southland Regional Association of Realtors**) rounded off the conversations by describing potential solutions to explore, such as increasing supply through incentivizing development. Track 4 was sponsored by **Kaiser Permanente** and **California Lutheran University**, and the Housing panel was sponsored by **Consensus**, **Sheppard Mullin**, and **Southland Regional Association of Realtors**.

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Track 5 | Day 1: Energy

Moderated by Charlie Crumpley (**San Fernando Valley Business Journal**), our Energy panel focused on the future of California's energy policies. Joseph Avila (**Southern California Gas Company**) voiced the focus should be on reliability and affordability for working families as we change our energy portfolio to account for changes in climate and demand. Nancy Sutley discussed storage options and capacity for the **Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's** 100% renewable energy goal. Tiffany Roberts (**Western States Petroleum Association**) gave a business perspective on the future of California's energy policy, and the work that lies ahead for businesses and lawmakers alike to make clean energy feasible. Track 5 was sponsored by the **California Alliance for Renewable Energy Solutions**, and the Energy panel was sponsored by the **Los Angeles Department of Water and Power** and the **Western States Petroleum Association**.

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TRACK 1 | DAY 2: Tourism panel moderator Scott Mills (**The Garland**) addresses panelists Mark Davis (**Sun Hill Properties/Hilton Universal City**), Patrick Lammerding (**Hollywood Burbank Airport**), and Adam Burke (**LA Tourism and Convention Board**)



TRACK 2 | DAY 2: Workforce panel with moderator Jim Ghormley (**University of Phoenix**), Robert Barrett (**University of West Los Angeles**), Eric Bullard (**UCLA**), Anthony Mueller (**The Boeing Company**), and Holly Schroeder (**Santa Clarita Valley Economic Development Corporation**)



TRACK 3 | DAY 2: News panel with moderator Alison MacLeod (**KP Public Affairs**), Barak Lurie (**Lurie & Seltzer**), Benjamin Davis (**California State University, Northridge**), Thomas Bray (**Daily News of Los Angeles**), and David Zahnizer (**Los Angeles Times**).



TRACK 4 | DAY 2: Healthcare panel with moderator Matthew Welsh (**Amgen**), Dr. Kenneth Kim (**Cosmos Health Solutions**), Dr. Jeff Smith (**Cedars-Sinai Health System**), Martha Santana-Chin (**HealthNet**), and Dr. Nolan Chang (**Southern California Permanente Medical Group**)

Track 1 | Day 2:

Tourism/Travel

The hospitality and tourism industries are central to the Los Angeles Economy, and were also central to the Tourism/Travel panel, moderated by Scott Mills (**The Garland**). Mark Davis (**Sun Hill Properties/Hilton Universal City**) shared optimism for the tourism industry, saying this is a great time to expand, remodel and prepare for the future. Professor Simon Hudson of the University of South Carolina recommended hard solutions to the stagnation of the industry, including government cooperation and rapid testing. Patrick Lammerding provided a status update on the **Hollywood Burbank Airport** replacement terminal project and provided insight into what the new facility will look like after the pandemic. Adam Burke (**L.A. Tourism and Convention Board**) indicated that Los Angeles is in a great position to recover from the pandemic because of our climate and vast array of attractions. Track 1 was sponsored by **Clear Channel Outdoor**, and the Tourism/Travel panel was sponsored by the **Hollywood Burbank Airport** and **Sun Hill Properties/Hilton Universal City**.



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Track 2 | Day 2:

Workforce – Skills Needed

Moderated by Jim Ghormley (**University of Phoenix**), the Workforce panel focused on shifts in the skills needed from the workforce of the future. Robert Barrett (**University of West Los Angeles**) expressed concern with our workforce, stating students “are not having the benefit of the college experience, and [we] wonder what effects that will have on them.” Eric Bullard (**UCLA**) further discussed workforce education, saying “colleges and universities will need to [serve] audiences that are looking to retrain and go into new careers.” Anthony Mueller (**The Boeing Company**) discussed the challenges presented by COVID-19 for businesses, including the need to rethink keeping employees safe. Holly Schroeder of the Santa Clarita Valley Economic Development Corporation offered advice on a balance of working from home and coming into the office, and what effects that may have on the needs of the workforce. Track 2 was sponsored by the **University of Phoenix**, and the Workforce – Skills Needed panel was sponsored by **UCLA** and the **University of West Los Angeles**.



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Track 3 | Day 2:

News

Trust and reliability of the news and non-traditional media sources were the focus of our News panel, moderated by Alison MacLeod (**KP Public Affairs**). Barak Lurie of Lurie & Seltzer provided insight into the different types of news sources and the different character and information each provide. Benjamin Davis (**California State University, Northridge**) discussed the future of News, saying there will always be a need to ask tough questions, develop sources and provide face-to-face interaction. Thomas Bray of the Southern California News Group reiterated the quote that “broadband is a civil rights issue,” arguing that the digital divide has been exacerbated as 60 million children lack regular internet access. David Zahnizer of the Los Angeles Times argued that social media has been valuable to the spread of news and information by democratizing the news, as well as providing real-time information and context to help frame social movements. Track 3 was sponsored by **ViacomCBS** and the News Panel was sponsored by **KP Public Affairs**.



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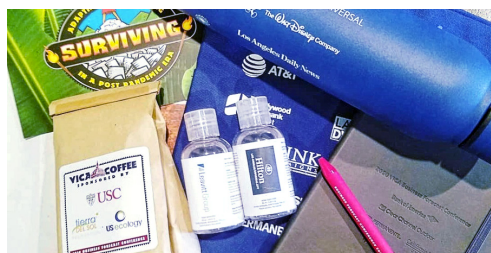
Track 4 | Day 2:

Healthcare

Health is the most important factor in a pandemic, and our healthcare panel, moderated by Matthew Welsh (**Amgen**), provided insight into issues and innovations that have arisen. Some vital questions about the COVID-19 vaccine trials and timelines were answered by Dr. Kenneth Kim of Cosmos Health Solutions. Some unseen side effects of the pandemic were discussed by



TRACK 5 | DAY 2: Diversity Panel with moderator Matthew Swearman (**Valley Village**), Capri Maddox (**LA Department of Civil and Human Rights**), Dr. Theopia Jackson (**Saybrook University**), and Jacques McClendon (**Los Angeles Rams**).



The swag box that was sent to attendees and provided by our sponsors was a real treat!

Dr. Jeff Smith (**Cedars-Sinai Health System**), including the lack of childhood immunizations and routine health visits. Martha Santana-Chin of **Health Net** talked about the “next frontier” of healthcare, Telehealth and Telemedicine. In an overview, Dr. Nolan Chang of **Southern California Permanente Medical Group** stated that, “everybody deserves the same great care and the ability to achieve the same great outcomes.” Track 4 was sponsored by **Kaiser Permanente** and **California Lutheran University**, and the Healthcare panel was sponsored by **Cedars Sinai**, **Cosmos**, and **HealthNet**.

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Track 5 | Day 2:

Diversity

The Diversity panel, moderated by Matthew Swearman (**Valley Village**), focused on sustainable and meaningful change to promote diversity, equity and inclusion. Capri Maddox of the Los Angeles Department of Civil and Human Rights discussed inequity in the job market and underrepresentation in the workplace. Dr. Theopia Jackson (**Saybrook University**) offered recommendations to recognize and combat personal biases and assumptions. She explained “many times we are not aware of our biases, and we are actually acting from them.” Jacques McClendon (**Los Angeles Rams**) emphasized the importance of the NFL’s platform and the diverse representation it provides to the public. Track 5 was sponsored by the **California Alliance for Renewable Energy Solutions**, and the Diversity panel was sponsored by the **Los Angeles Rams** and **Saybrook University**.

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KEYNOTE

- ▶ US Bank
- ▶ The Walt Disney Company

BREAKFAST FORECAST

- ▶ Bank of America

TRACKS

- ▶ California Alliance for Renewable Energy
- ▶ California Lutheran University
- ▶ Clear Channel Outdoor
- ▶ Kaiser Permanente
- ▶ University of Phoenix
- ▶ ViacomCBS

JOURNAL

- ▶ Pacific Federal

CENTERPIECE

- ▶ Van Nuys Airport

BREAKFAST

- ▶ Starbucks

PANELS

- ▶ Cedars Sinai
- ▶ Consensus
- ▶ Cosmos Health Solutions
- ▶ FilmLA
- ▶ Health Net
- ▶ Hollywood Burbank Airport
- ▶ Klink Campaigns
- ▶ KP Public Affairs
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- ▶ Sun Hill Properties/Hilton Universal Hotel
- ▶ Synergy Global Housing
- ▶ UCLA
- ▶ University of West Los Angeles
- ▶ Western States Petroleum Association

EXHIBIT HALL

- ▶ California State University, Northridge

EXHIBIT BOX

- ▶ AT&T

COFFEE

- ▶ Tierra del Sol Foundation
- ▶ University of Southern California
- ▶ US Ecology

CHARGING CABLE

- ▶ Boeing

HAND SANITIZER

- ▶ Leavitt Group

HAPPY HOUR

- ▶ Trammell Crow Company

VIP RECEPTION

- ▶ Anthem
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